



**INDIANA**  
DEPARTMENT OF  
**CHILD**  
SERVICES

# **Recognizing & Reporting Child Abuse & Neglect**

**Presentation to Centerstone\_\_\_\_  
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# Our Mission

The Indiana Department of Child Services (DCS) protects children from child abuse & neglect & works to ensure their financial support.



*Children thrive in safe, caring, supportive families and communities*

# Child Welfare

## Core Functions:

- Protect & keep children safe from abuse & neglect.
- Receive reports of abuse & neglect.
- Complete assessments on reports.
- Ongoing case management to guide a family through services, placement, permanency & case closure.



# Child Support Bureau

The child support program is federally required, state administered & county operated.

## Child Support Core Functions:

- Locate
- Paternity establishment
- Support order establishment
- Enforcement
- Payment processing
- Disbursement
- ISETS / INvest
- Medical Support



# What is Physical Abuse?

Any non-accidental physical injury to a child caused by a parent or caregiver that results in or threatens serious injury.



# What is Neglect?

Parent, guardian or custodian does not supply child with:

- Food
- Shelter
- Education
- Clothing
- Medical Care
- Supervision



# How Do You Report Child Abuse?

Call the Child Abuse & Neglect Hotline

**800.800.5556**



*Children thrive in safe, caring, supportive families and communities*

# Who Should Report?

Indiana is a mandatory reporting state. Any person who has reason to believe a child is being abused or neglected shall make a report.

Medical professionals, teachers & law enforcement officials have a higher duty to report abuse or neglect.





# Reporting

## **Call 800.800.5556. An intake specialist:**

- Directs caller immediately to 911 or law enforcement if child is in imminent danger.
- Listens/asks questions using intake guidance tool.
- Captures report information.
- Sends report to local county office to determine next steps



# Reporting

**Intake specialists will ask questions about the child's current circumstances, safety, & identifying information:**

- Names of children involved
- Parent, guardian or custodian's name
- Substance abuse issues
- Mental health concerns
- Ages of children
- Addresses & phone numbers
- Domestic violence
- Weapons in the home

**Always report suspected abuse even if you don't know the answers to all the questions.**



# Reporting

## After the call:

- A thorough review of any known previous child protective services history with the family is completed.
- The intake specialist will finish the official intake report.
- Report forwarded to local county office to determine next steps.



# Action

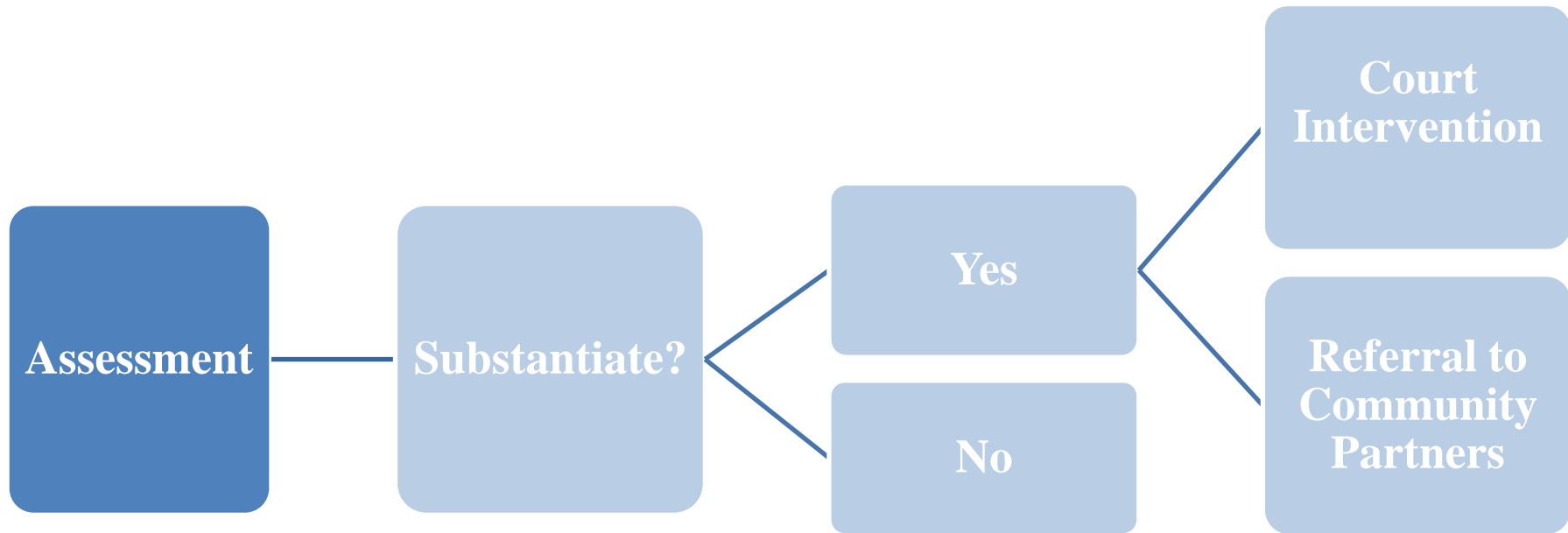
Per Indiana law, certain criteria must be met before a family case manager can be dispatched to a home. If criteria is met, a thorough assessment may be called for:

- Immediately/1 hour (imminent danger)
- Within 24 hours
- Up to 5 days

Calls with similar allegations to an open case are referred for follow-up.



# Intervention Process



# Assessment

## **A family case manager will:**

- Talk with the report source, parents, extended families, child, siblings, witnesses.
- Visit home or place where alleged abuse/neglect occurred.
- Determine if environment is safe for the child.
- Request medical, mental health examinations, substance abuse screens.



# Outcomes of Assessment

## **Substantiate**

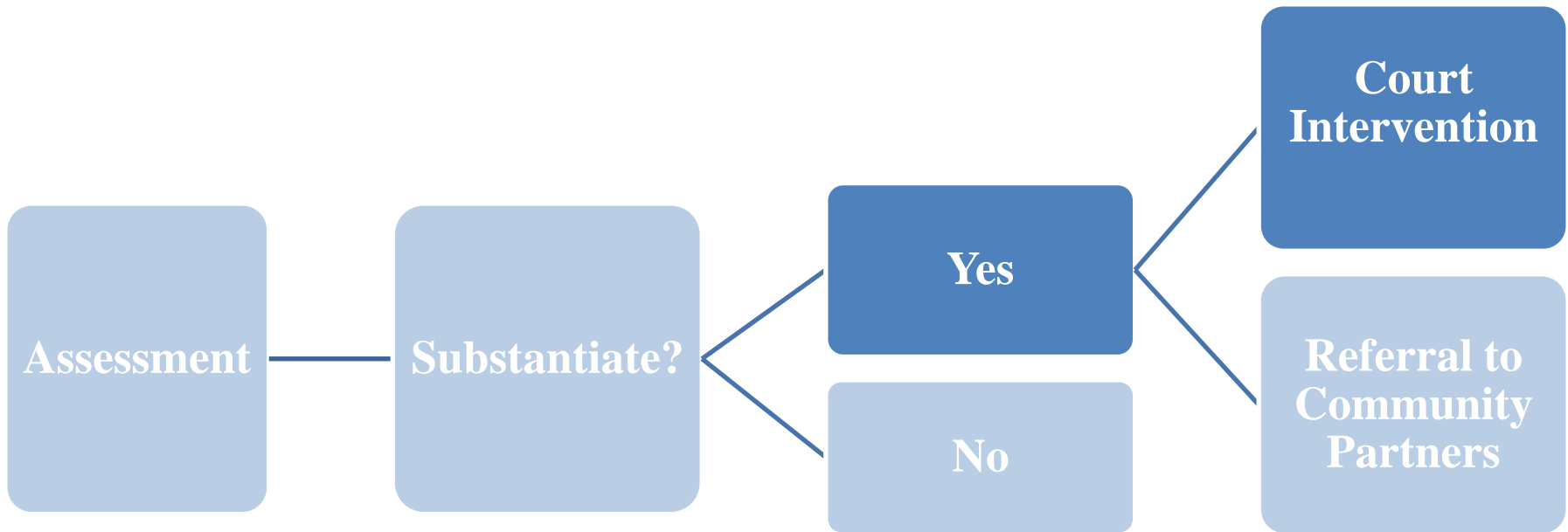
DCS finds enough facts to prove that child abuse or neglect has occurred.

## **Unsubstantiate**

DCS finds no credible evidence that child abuse or neglect has occurred.



# Intervention Process





# Level of Intervention

## Level of intervention with substantiation:

- Informal adjustment.
- Child in Need of Services (CHINS).
- No formal involvement needed.



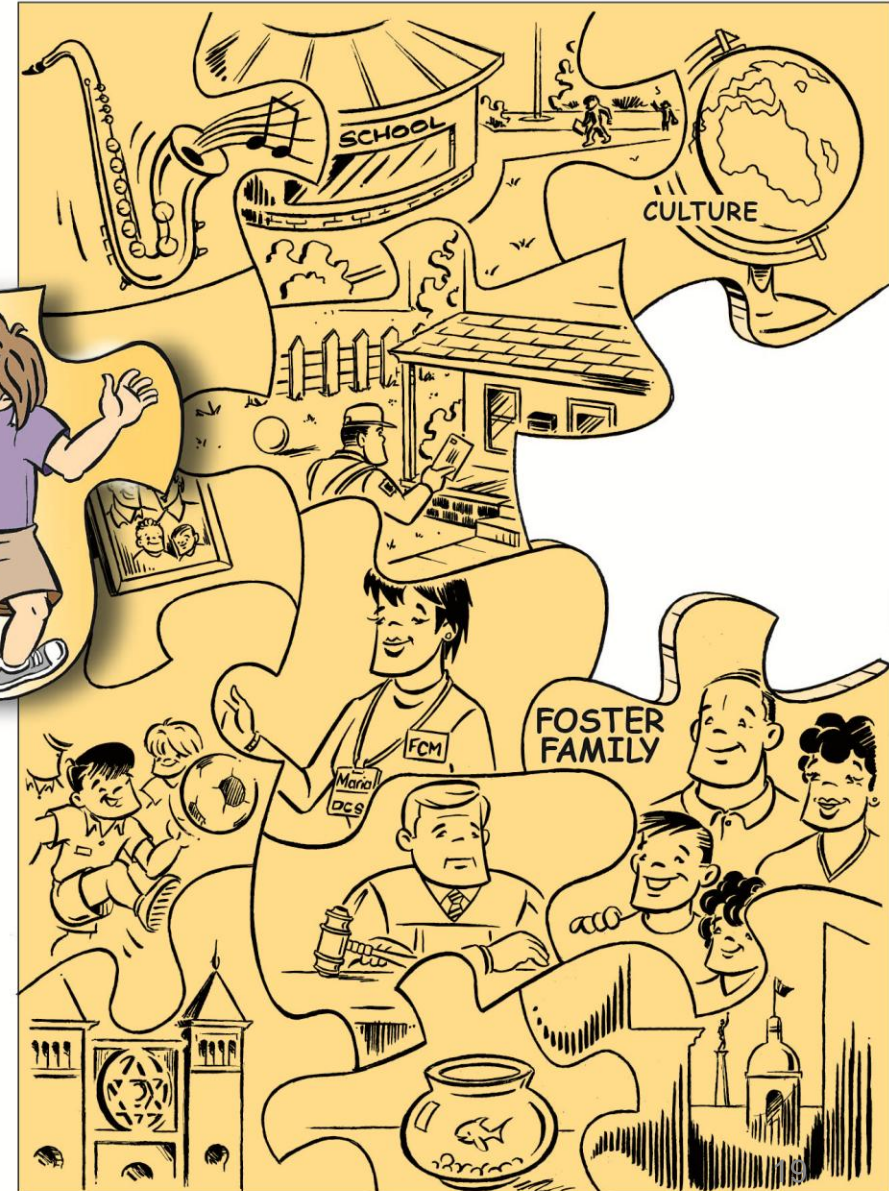
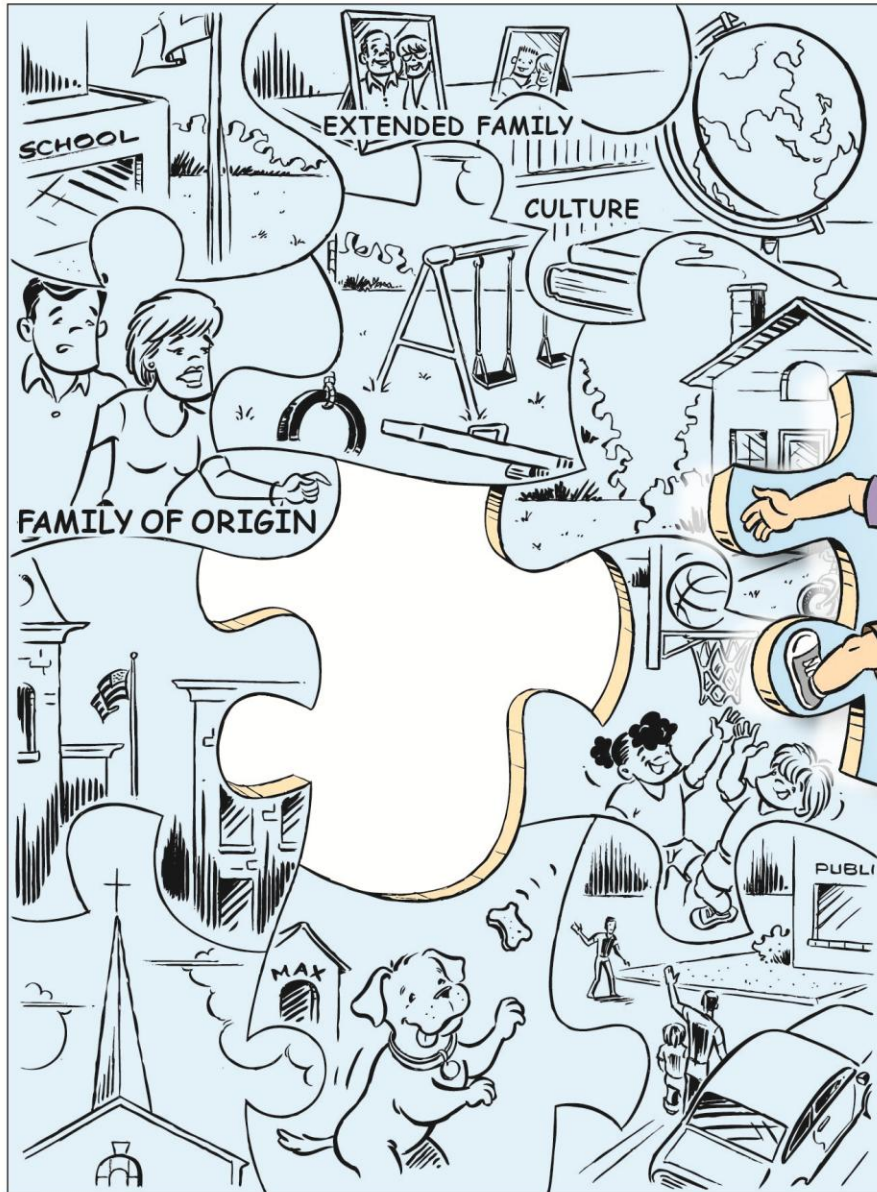
# Placement Options

## Out-of-home care is sometimes needed:

- Relative caregiver
- Foster home
- Group home
- Residential placement
- Psychiatric facility



# One Child, Two Worlds: Where Do I Fit? How Do I Fit?



# Safely Home, Families First

- Children are safely at home with services or with appropriate relatives.
- Indiana law requires DCS to consider relative placement before considering any other out-of-home placement.
- National research shows when children are placed with relatives, there are improvements in outcomes, reductions in case length & fewer traumatic effects of removals.



# Removal

## **When deciding to remove a child from a home, DCS will:**

- Regard the safety of the child as most important.
- Consider whether the parent is amenable to accepting any needed services.
- Encourage the child & family team.
- Utilize information gathered in the assessment.
- Use information gathered in safety & risk assessments.





# Ongoing Case Management

**DCS must make reasonable efforts to preserve and reunify the family in line with Indiana law.**

**Case management assures child's safety by:**

- Scheduling regular meetings with the family & child.
- Ensuring needed family & child services are received.
- Convening the child & family team.
- Completing court reports.
- Developing a plan for permanency.
- Facilitating parenting time & sibling visitation.



# How You Can Help

- Report child abuse to the Hotline: **800.800.5556.**
- Offer to help your relatives, friends & neighbors who are under stress and may need some assistance. Perhaps you can babysit, cook, provide transportation, mentor.
- Become a foster parent: 888.631.9510.
- Become an adoptive parent: 888.25ADOPT.
- Purchase a 'Kids First' license plate to help fund prevention services.

